

Web Site Provides Instant Access To Available Emergency Housing

Florida State University



Finding temporary shelter quickly after losing a home in a natural disaster such as a hurricane, earthquake, or forest fire is one of the most stressful challenges anyone can face. A new online resource created by faculty at Florida State University in Tallahassee provides government officials, real estate agents, and natural disaster victims with immediate access to information about available emergency housing in the area.

A research team led by Janet Dilling, director of Florida State University's Center for Disaster Risk Policy, created Disaster Housing Resources Online (DHROnline), a unique Web site that provides listings and descriptions of available rental properties in the region, as well as nearby states. The system operates on both a Web server and a database server at Florida State University.

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Federal Emergency and Management Agency (FEMA) and the State Emergency Response Team launched DHROnline in

2004 in the aftermath of four major storms that hit Florida during the hurricane season. At its height, DHROnline listed more than 30,000 housing resources. In total, 120,000 housing opportunities were listed during the recovery from those storms.

The Web site was originally created for real estate agents and property owners in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. However, because of the widespread destruction from hurricanes Rita and Katrina in 2005, Florida State University expanded the DHROnline license to all 50 states.

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